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P 230746Z JUN 08
FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4378
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 0694
RUZEHAA/CDR USEUCOM INTEL VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHMFIISS/CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

UNCLAS NIAMEY 000616

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PTER ASEC NG
SUBJECT: MNJ KIDNAPS FRENCH URANIUM WORKERS

¶1. (U) The MNJ has claimed on its website to have kidnapped four French employees of the uranium mining company COMINAK (a subsidiary of AREVA) in the northern town of Airlit the night of June 21/22. It has not made any demands, and says that it will release the four as soon as arrangements can be worked out with the Red Cross. It claimed to have kidnapped the French workers to show that the GON cannot ensure security in the north. It reiterated its warning to foreign mining companies operating there.

¶2. (SBU) The French DCM said that the workers were seized around 6:30 or 7:00 the morning of June 22 while hiking outside the COMINAK compound. He was optimistic that they would be released to the Red Cross on June 23 or 24.

ALLEN